

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2014
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Co-chair Martinez; Co-chair Banta
Council members: Lyons, *Martinez-Walker, *DeJesus
**Council President McCarthy

**=arrived late*

***=sat in to make a quorum prior to Council member Martinez-Walker's arrival*

CITY STAFF: R. Gupta, Grants Writer, Central Grants Office
C. Smith, Central Grants Office
Kristen Bay-Horton, Health Department
M. Perez, Sr. Economic Development Associate, OPED

OTHER(s): Doug Holcomb, Greater Bpt Transit (GBTA)

Co-chair Martinez called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

Approval of Committee Minutes of April 3, 2014 and April 9, 2014.

**** CO-CHAIR MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Co-chair Martinez stated that the agenda would be taken out of order.

75-13 Grant Submission: re State Department of Transportation for Dial A Ride-Municipal Matching Program for Elderly.

Ms. Gupta stated that this grant was for funding from the state to provide services for the elderly and disabled that reside home and can request services through a senior center. The amount of \$81,121 was allocated and there is a city match of \$42,000 in-kind services assigned by GBTA per Doug Holcomb who was present tonight.

Co-chair Banta asked the number people that were served. Mr. Holcomb said the number was just under 7,000 trips, noting that there are typically 10,000 trips per year.

He explained that the senior centers group people together and there is an option to turn the funds over to GBTA, but it's not a requirement. Ms. Gupta stated that it's beneficial to the city to turn the funds over to GBTA.

Council member Lyons asked if the program was strictly for seniors with disabilities that live in their own home. Mr. Holcomb said the program is for any senior in any home, noting that scheduling of trips is left up to the senior center. For instance, he explained that if there was a senior center or complex that was looking to take a local trip to the Christmas Tree Shop for example; the GBTA could organize the trip. Overall, he said the service is primarily for large groups.

Co-chair Banta asked the specific criteria required. Ms. Gupta said the person must be 65 years old.

Co-chair Martinez asked if there was an income level required. Mr. Holcomb said no.

Mr. Holcomb stated that all (169) towns in the region receive the grant based on 65% of the geographic area, noting that the Town of Fairfield has its own grant.

Co-chair Martinez asked if the senior center located on East Main Street qualifies for the service. Ms. Gupta said yes for the larger trips.

Mr. Holcomb explained that the city has to be sensitive to the amount of money in the grant, noting that the services can be opened up, but it may not be necessary because many of the seniors use the city bus or ADA service. He further explained that one senior center with only fifteen seniors would quickly use up the funds – *he offered his phone number to Co-chair Martinez to reach him for additional information.*

Council member Martinez-Walker asked if this was a new program. Mr. Holcomb stated that the program has been done on behalf of the city since the year 2006.

Co-chair Martinez asked what the statistics were on the number of people served. Mr. Holcomb responded that it's based on hour, trip and general cost. He added that each trip equates to \$5.60 per trip.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

76-13 Grant Submission: re FY2013 Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for Public Health Program.

Ms. Gupta stated that they applied for this grant to request a public health associate to work in conjunction with the Health Department. The associate's salary and benefits will be provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The associate will help the city with different projects. She stated that no city dollars are attached and the associate will be in place for two years, noting that it will be a great opportunity. She further noted that the qualifications for the associate will require an undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree who will gain experience in the public health sector. She relayed that 2,500 persons applied for (540) slots. She said it's a selective group and once the candidates are chosen, they then pick from the projects. Kristen Bay-Horton added that the projects to choose from are a) Food Policy for one year and b) Environmental Health Ordinance Exchange.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

82-13 Grant Submission: State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services for a Tobacco Retailer Education and Inspection Program.

Christine Smith, Central Grants Office stated that this grant wasn't applied for. The state approached them to give the funds to help reduce tobacco sales in stores and to target youth. They will provide training to conduct inspections of those stores selling to underage youth. She explained that they are reaching out to this population due to the high rate of tobacco sales to youth in Bridgeport. She further explained that if the rate goes above 20% they will lose funding support, noting that Connecticut is #42 out of #50 for selling tobacco illegally to youth.

She stated that they are looking to conduct four inspections each for a total of 1,000 inspections at a cost of \$60.00 per inspection, which will include overtime and

incentives for the youth and supplies for education. She noted that they will conduct inspections from July 2014 through February 2015.

Kristen Bay-Horton commented that the smoking rates statistics in Bridgeport are enormously high with 1 in 4 youth that smoke cigarettes.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

69-13 Proposed Resolution concerning disposition of city-owned property, located at 38 Luther Street and ordering a public hearing relative to the same.

Max Perez distributed photos of the lot located on Luther Street. He explained that the neighbor across the street Miguel Reyes is looking to take the lot and create a garden. He said his biggest complaint is that the property isn't being taken care of by the city, noting that people trespass on the property, dump trash etc. Mr. Reyes made an offer of \$1,000 which was the appraised value of the lot that was done on January 7, 2014.

Council member Lyons stated that she was familiar with the street, noting that it floods immensely when it rains and houses get flooded. She further stated that the end of the street is used for dumping and she didn't feel that anyone could ever build on the property due to the environmental hazard, noting that there is garbage in the brook etc. She expressed that this proposal will bring up the value of the homes on the street.

Co-chair Martinez asked if any remediation would be required. Mr. Perez said that would be up to the purchaser.

Council member DeJesus asked if the purchaser is also the abutter. Mr. Perez said the purchaser Mr. Reyes lives across the street from the lot.

Council member DeJesus questioned how the lot abuts to the other surrounding homes. Mr. Perez displayed a rendering showing two houses that surround the property and he pointed out the property that Mr. Reyes owns across the street. He further pointed out the area where the garden will be and he clarified that it's not a buildable lot. He stated that he would recommend that a fence be built and that the condition would be added to the sales contract.

Council member DeJesus questioned how this proposal would coincide with other community gardens in the area. Mr. Perez said the garden will be on private property and it's not a community garden. He stated that the property will also be on the tax role. And the purchaser will plant bushes and clean up the lot to make it look nice.

Co-chair Banta asked how the lot was assessed at \$1,000.00. Mr. Perez clarified that the lot was appraised not assessed and the appraisal amount was calculated from a comparison to other lots in the area.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** CO-CHAIR BANTA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

77-13 2014 Neighborhood Assistance Act.

Mr. Perez said the item has come before the committee every year – *he distributed a listing of non-profits that applied for the state run program to provide funding for tax exempt organizations who contribute cash as business tax credits*. Council member Lyons read the list of organizations and the associated contribution amount.

Mr. Perez explained that it's a state program with no city money involved. He explained that if an organization makes a donation of say \$25k to Habitat for Humanity to build a house, Habitat for Humanity then receives the credit to write off on their taxes. The donation is done through an application process that the organization initiates. He stated that a public hearing is scheduled, they have to meet the deadline date and then the list is submitted for approval.

Co-chair Martinez questioned why the city council wasn't aware of the program so that they could have let people know to apply. Mr. Perez acknowledged the comment and he stated that he would ensure that the program is advertised in the future.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

78-13 Proposed resolution concerning disposition of city owned property, located at 63 Waldorf Avenue to Habitat for Humanity and ordering a Public hearing relative to the same.

Mr. Perez stated that this item pertained to a small lot that was previously discussed, but it required City Hall Committee approval. It's a 50x100 lot that will go to Habitat for Humanity for \$1.00 to build a duplex two-family home.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** CO-CHAIR BANTA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT McCARTHY MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING**

**** CO-CHAIR BANTA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNED

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** CO-CHAIR BANTA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services